

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 FEA-01 IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00

NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 AGR-05 CEA-01

COME-00 FRB-03 H-01 INR-07 INT-05 L-02 LAB-04 NSC-05

PA-01 RSC-01 AID-05 CIEP-01 SS-15 STR-01 TAR-01

TRSE-00 PRS-01 SP-02 OMB-01 /093 W

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FM USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8186

INFO ALL EC CAPITALS IMMEDIATE 282

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRD, EC, GATT

SUBJECT: EC PREPARATION FOR MULTILATERAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS (MTN)

REF: A. EC BRUSSELS 448 B. STATE 20100

1. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION ABOUT PROGRESS OF EC PREPARATIONS FOR MTN, EC COMMISSION VP SOAMES TOLD AMBASSADOR GREENWALD JANUARY 28 THAT THE PAPER ON MTN GUIDELINES IS "IN GOOD SHAPE." ACCORDING TO SOAMES, THERE WERE ONLY THREE OR FOUR OUTSTANDING ISSUES TO BE SETTLED AT THE EC COUNCIL MEETING ON FEBRUARY 10-11. WHILE THERE WOULD

BE SOME CHANGES IN THE ORIGINAL COMMISSION PAPER (REFTEL A) THE BASIC THRUST WOULD BE RETAINED. FOLLOWING AMBASSADOR'S STRONG URGING THAT THE COMMISSION SEEK MAXIMUM FLEXIBILITY SOAMES SAID THAT THE NEW DIRECTIVE WOULD NOT ADD RESTRICTIONS ON THE COMMISSIONS' TACTICAL FLEXIBILITY. HE FELT THAT US REPRESENTATIONS IN MEMBER STATE CAPITALS WERE NEITHER NECESSARY NOR DESIRABLE AND AT THIS TIME COULD ONLY ADD TO MEMBER STATE PRESSURE FOR TACTICAL RESTRICTIONS IN THIS DOCUMENT.

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2. IN A SEPARATE CONVERSATION, HIJZEN AND HANNAY SAID THAT THE

ONLY REAL MTN PROBLEM THEY SAW IN COMING WEEKS WAS THE AGRICULTURAL COMMITTEE ISSUE. THEY FEARED THAT PRECIPITATING THE QUESTION OF TREATMENT OF AGRICULTURE AS A MATTER OF PRINCIPLE AT THIS STAGE WOULD RESULT IN INCLUSION OF FRENCH SUGGESTIONS IN GUIDELINES SPECIFICALLY PINNING EC DOWN TO HARD LINE ON DISCUSSING ANY MATTER RELATED TO AGRICULTURE ONLY IN A SPECIAL AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE. THEY WOULD LIKE TO AVOID THIS OUTCOME AND WOULD LIKE TO FIND AT LEAST A TEMPORARY SOLUTION WITH THE US WHICH WOULD PUT THE MATTER OFF PAST THE MID-FEBRUARY EC AND TNC MEETINGS WITHOUT PREJUDICING THE POSITION OF EITHER SIDE. TO THIS END THEY URGED A PROMPT UNDERSTANDING WITH US NEGOTIATORS ON A MUTUALLY-SATISFACTORY TACTICAL FORMULA TO AVOID HAVING THIS ISSUE COME TO A HEAD AT THE TNC. THE NECESSITY FOR THIS POSTPONEMENT OF THE ISSUE HAS BECOME APPARENT TO THEM ESPECIALLY AFTER THE US-EC CONVERSATIONS OF JANUARY 21-22.

3. WE BELIEVE IT IS IMPORTANT TO AVOID CONFRONTATION WITH EC ON COMMITTEE STRUCTURE ISSUE AT THIS STAGE. THERE HAVE BEEN AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN EC AND US ON TREATMENT OF AGRICULTURE IN MTN. HOWEVER, IT SEEMS WISE TO TRY TO AVOID HAVING EC COMMISSION TIED DOWN IN ITS FIRST MANDATE ON THIS ISSUE MORE EXPLICITLY AND NARROWLY THAN IT ALREADY IS. ALSO, BELIEVE WE NEED TIME AND AS MUCH FLEXIBILITY AS POSSIBLE FOR A FIRST INFORMAL, POLITICAL-LEVEL EXCHANGE BETWEEN RESPONSIBLE US AND EC OFFICIALS AFTER THE APPROVAL OF US LEGISLATION AND EC GUIDELINES. THIS EXCHANGE PRESUMABLY CANNOT BE ARRANGED BEFORE END OF FEBRUARY AT THE EARLIEST. IT SHOULD FOCUS NOT ONLY ON THE NARROW PROBLEM OF COMMITTEE STRUCTURE BUT ON BROADER EFFORTS TO MANAGE THE ENTIRE RANGE OF TACTICAL AND STRATEGIC ISSUES. FOR AGRICULTURE THIS WOULD MEAN NOT ONLY COMMITTEE STRUCTURE BUT ALSO THE GENERAL APPROACH AND THE RELATION OF THE MTN TO THE LONDON GRAIN DISCUSSIONS.

4. THIS CABLE WAS DRAFTED BEFORE RECEIPT OF REFTEL B.
GREENWALD

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, MEETINGS, FOREIGN TRADE, NEGOTIATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 JAN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MorefiRH
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975ECBRU00784
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750032-0792
From: EC BRUSSELS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750111/aaaaajpf.tel
Line Count: 96
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 EC BRUSSELS 448, 75 STATE 20100
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MorefiRH
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09 APR 2003 by MartinML>; APPROVED <16 MAY 2003 by MorefiRH>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: EC PREPARATION FOR MULTILATERAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS (MTN)
TAGS: ETRD, EC, GATT
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006